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## Information Systems: Transforming the Future

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## A Rating Tool for Effective Social Media Policy Development

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### Abstract

*Social media technologies are increasingly being adopted to support knowledge sharing and collaboration in both the private and public sectors. It has therefore become essential to develop policies guiding the use of social media within organisations. The need to protect an organisation's interests by guiding employees' appropriate use of social media is a key issue for senior managers. This issue has to be balanced against the benefits of empowering employees to make use of social media in flexible, innovative ways. This paper highlights the major components of a social media policy, based on the Social Media and Organisation Policy (SOMEOP) Framework. A method is proposed to enable organisations to effectively evaluate each of the components using a rating system. The framework and rating tool can be used to improve the effectiveness of policy development. A preliminary validation of the instrument indicated that the rating system can assist users with identifying and understanding policy strengths and weaknesses.*

### Keywords

Knowledge management, Social media, policy, Policy rating, Web 2.0

### INTRODUCTION

Web 2.0 - also called the participative Web, read/write Web and people-centric Web - refers to the second phase of the Internet that has been continuously expanding over the past few years (Knights 2007) and enables the use of social media. The development of Web 2.0 is rather remarkable as it enables users to communicate with a larger audience and access vast amounts of information quickly and effectively. As a result of this capability many organisations - especially within the government sector - are developing policies to provide a sense of security when employees utilise this technology in their daily activities. Organisations often have concerns when using social media, including the perceived fear of leaked sensitive information and unethical activities that are associated with social media tools. The role of policy is therefore essential to guide usage and provide security for both organisations and their employees (Moule and Giavara 1995).

Organisations implement many different types of policies such as communication, health and security policies. However, there are only two main categories of policies, namely private policies and public policies (Hale 1988; Moule and Giavara 1995). Most of the widely available policies fall into the category of public policies and government entities devote significant resources to the development and deployment of these policies. Colebath (2005) suggests that public policies are usually quite complex whereas policies used within private organisations are more straightforward. Unfortunately, such private policies often fail to achieve their intended purpose (David 2002) because they focus on technology instead of the human aspect such as the behaviour of users of the technology.

An effective policy that guides all aspects of user behaviour can be a powerful tool for an organisation. Traditionally, organisations aimed to ensure that their policies focussed on the laws protecting the interests of the organisation (Ryder 1996). This often resulted in the use of complex terms within the policy (Husin and Hanisch 2011a). An interesting aspect of the introduction of social media has been the lack of effective policy development; to date very few organisations have developed any type of social media policy (Quilty 2009; Husin and Hanisch 2011b). This has led to issues such as employee misconduct (e.g. information leakage and cyber bullying) and the failure of social media implementations (Husin and Hanisch 2011a; Jackson 2009), underlining the need for an effective social media policy.

The main issue identified in this research is that there is a lack of clarity within organisations regarding what constitutes a good social media policy. Furthermore, there are different perceptions of the outcomes of implementing such a policy; for example, ensuring that the technology covers the security needs of the organisation (David 2002) or that the goals of the organisation are achieved through the use of the social media tools (Hrdinova et al., 2010). Alternatively, a policy may predominantly focus on legal issues such as the protection of intellectual property or prescribing acceptable behaviours within the workplace (Doherty et al. 2010). These differences arise in part because the perceptions depend on the situation surrounding the policy implementation. However, it is clear that a comprehensive policy should protect the interests of the organisation by ensuring that the goals of the organisation can be achieved through specific guidelines, without compromising the benefits of the tools used (Fenwick et al. 2010).

This paper contributes to effective policy development by proposing a rating tool that can be used to assess and improve an organisation's social media policy. Issues such as comprehensiveness and complexity, as well as a focus on both technology and the human aspects, are addressed by the rating tool. The next section describes the research method that was used to identify the initial components to include in the rating system. This is followed by a description of how these components can be used to rate an organisation's social media policy. Next, the process of validating the components of the measurement tool is outlined and the results are discussed. Finally, the conclusion highlights the contributions of the paper and suggests areas for further research.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research was based on a mixed method approach (triangulation) as collaborative technologies such as social media are pluralistic and quite complex (Ng-Kruelle 2005; Kaplan and Haenlein 2010). The data collection methods used in this research were a combination of semi-structured interviews with ten participants, questionnaires with eighty-one respondents and a focus group session with nine participants. The participants consisted of managers from various levels of the organisation within the age range of early 30s to 50s. The organisation, identified through a combination of available literature and industry contacts, was in the initial stages of implementing a social media platform. The organisation's strategy was to improve key capabilities such as information sharing, collaboration and innovation, through the implementation of a social media platform. This necessitated the development of a social media policy to guide management and employees in utilising the platform effectively.

A review of the literature revealed only a limited number of frameworks designed to assist organisations with developing an effective social media policy (David 2002; Wergin 1976; Doherty et al. 2010; Moule and Giavara 1995). It was found that some policies focus on the important aspects of social media and are very flexible, but do not protect the interests of the organisation (Husin and Hanisch 2011a). On the other end of the scale, some policies were found to be too complex and controlling (Husin and Hanisch 2011b). In order to improve the development of social media policies, it is essential to identify the important components of a policy. Methods to identify and measure important components of social media policies are limited and costly. As a result of the research study conducted within the government organisation a new framework, called Social Media and Organisation Policy (SOMEOP) was developed (Husin and Hanisch 2011a) to address these issues and provide organisations with some structured guidelines for developing social media policies. A review of the existing literature was conducted along with both informal and semi-structured interviews to inform the development of the framework. The framework was initially validated by a government department that was in the process of developing a new social media policy (Husin and Hanisch 2011b).

Previous research predominantly focused on the development of policies rather than ways to evaluate policy effectiveness. Flynn (2009) suggests that the best policies usually consist of a combination of employee education, best practices and enforcement. Unfortunately, most organisations rely on employee guidelines or policies (employee education) to provide employees with the required information (Flynn 2009). Some elements of a policy that are mandated to protect the organisation (enforcement) may impact negatively on the way social media tools are deployed. A rating method was thus developed as a simple tool to allow researchers and practitioners to develop effective policies.

The components for the rating tool were chosen based on their applicability and importance within a policy (Flynn 2009; Doherty et al. 2010; Fenwick et al. 2010). These rating components were chosen based on the researcher's interpretations of the three kinds of knowledge about policy, namely epistemic knowledge (causal links and chains – coverage and responsibility), practical-technical knowledge (derived from tacit knowledge – ramifications and disclaimers) and practical value rationality (derived from an ethics point of view – transparency) as highlighted by Tenbensel (2006). The initial grading system consisted of five components: coverage, responsibility, ramifications, disclaimers and transparency. Each of the components was awarded a maximum of one point depending on the breadth of information pertaining to it. The breadth of each of the components was based on the understanding that every user of social media tools is a new user and that even though a specific social media technology is not utilised by the organisation, the organisation should not ignore it (Flynn 2009 p. 4).

The rating components were then used to analyse the effectiveness of four publicly available social media policies. Characteristics that would help organisations to develop effective social media policies were identified (Husin and Hanisch 2011a). After the initial validation of the SOMEOP framework, the researcher re-examined the five-point grading system. It was found that the grading system did not adequately gauge the effectiveness of the social media policy as the point system did not provide much guidance for an organisation to effectively rate their policies. This prompted an improvement in the approach for rating social media policies. The components of the new rating method are explained in the next section.

## COMPONENTS OF THE RATING METHOD

Flynn (2009) suggests that one of the important rules for developing policies for communication channels is controlling content in order to mitigate the risks to an organisation. This is especially true for new and emerging technologies, such as social media, due to the flexibility and transparency that the technology provides to users. Such change also impacts the organisation's ability to protect their intellectual property and related information accessibility that is essential to their business activities (De Meyer and Loh 2004; Bertot et al. 2012). As a result, legal liability is one of the increasingly important issues faced by organisations (Flynn 2009). Through the use of policy an organisation can utilise any digitally stored content as evidence, if required. The importance of controlling content resulted in the first component of the rating method, namely *coverage*.

During the development of the SOMEOP framework (Husin and Hanisch 2011b), it became clear that very few social media policies clearly describe the responsibility of employees and senior management. Most of the interviewees mentioned that the policy regarding the use of social media was either ambiguous or unclear regarding their role. Employees were concerned that senior management could imply specific responsibility without clearly stating it in the policy, which could have an impact on their workload and productivity. This notion is supported by Flynn (2009), Hrdinova, Helbig and Peters (2010) and David (2002). The second component of the rating method is therefore *marking the responsibility*.

The third component of the rating tool is *ramifications of conduct* for employees as well as senior management. Most of the interviewees strongly agreed that a policy should contain clear information about the impact of specific conduct, especially if the conduct does not support the organisation's needs. If the consequences are not clearly stated, the employees might make ill-informed decisions that negatively affect the organisation. This is a concern for many senior managers especially when it comes to a new technology such as social media (Hinchcliffe 2007; Thomson 2009; Deloitte 2009). In order for employees to make correct and effective decisions, it was obvious that a higher level of transparency was needed within the policy to guide the employees in their daily work activities.

Many policies, including social media policies, often do not highlight the required level of transparency (Husin and Hanisch 2011a). Peter Alexander, the manager of the Online Services Branch at the Australian Government Information Management Office (AGIMO) highlights on his blog that the usage guidelines developed by AGIMO include advice on the users' responsibility when they are involved with social media (Alexander 2010). It is interesting that the guideline repeats the required level of transparency, especially when an employee airs an opinion on a social media platform. The employee or senior manager has to clearly state that it is their personal opinion, not that of the agency. This level of transparency, which indirectly ensures that employees are clear about what is allowed within the policy, is not common within a government agency (Hrdinova et al. 2010). Consequently, the fourth component in the rating method is *highlight needed transparency*.

The use of *disclaimers* within the policy is the fifth component included in the rating method. This component is important because specific social media tools such as blogs or Twitter allow the user to misrepresent an organisation or even a person. In 2009, there was a misrepresentation of an Australian Communication Minister by a Telstra employee (Moses 2009; Oakes 2009) who created a Twitter account under false pretence. Flynn

(2009) advises in her book that disclaimers should be used by bloggers to protect the organisation, even though it is not clear what level of protection might be provided for the organisation in case of a lawsuit.

Based on the explanation above, it is clear that the components are related to each other through the perspective of employees and also their organisation. This is intentional, as a policy not only highlights the strategic aims of the organisation (Hale 1988; Hrdinova et al. 2010) but also acts as a guide to employees in their daily work (Fenwick et al. 2010).

## APPLICATION OF THE RATING METHOD

In order to simplify the rating method, each of the components is rated on a grading scale with three indicators, namely low, medium and high. Each of the components has a set of rules or an explanation that governs how the grading is applied to a policy, as detailed below:

### Coverage

This refers to the amount of legal information covered by a policy, such as privacy issues, public disclosure and workplace ethics. Such legal information should be included in a policy to ensure its effectiveness. The legal information deemed important by Hrdinova, Helbig and Peters (2010) are privacy issues, public disclosure, intellectual property, workplace ethics and accessibility. These are dependent on the organisation's business activities. The suggested amount of legal information that should be included is based on the premise of minimising the number of policy pages and ensuring that employees are not deterred from reading the policy due to its length or complexity. If a policy has at least 3 pieces of legal information that correlate to the organisation's business activities, the coverage will be rated high.

- High** The policy has 3 or more pieces of legal information that correlate to the organisation's core business activities.
- Medium** The policy has 1 or 2 pieces of legal information that correlate to the organisation's core business activities.
- Low** The policy has no pieces of legal information or the information does not correlate with the organisation's core business activities.

### Marking the responsibility

The responsibility for employees and senior management should be clearly communicated. A good example is highlighting the ways in which an employee can use social media. The responsibilities should also be appropriately highlighted throughout the policy. A high rating is allocated if all of these rules are met.

- High** Both employees' and senior management's responsibilities are highlighted within the policy.
- Medium** Either the employees' responsibilities or the senior management responsibilities are highlighted within the policy.
- Low** Neither the employees' responsibilities or senior management responsibilities are included in the policy.

### Ramifications of conduct

This component essentially allows the employee to understand the implications of any misconduct. A good policy should include some examples of misconduct in relation to the appropriate situation. A good policy can also be identified through highlighting specific legal information, such as the organisation's code of conduct regarding breach of confidentiality. If the ramifications of conduct are clearly stated, this component is rated high.

- High** The ramifications of conduct are clearly stated and users can clearly understand the results of their conduct. Examples of misconduct are included.
- Medium** The ramifications of conduct are stated but not clear to users. No examples of misconduct are included.
- Low** There are no ramifications or examples of misconduct provided.

### Highlight needed transparency

A policy is deemed to have a high level of transparency when it contains specific instructions about how employees should represent their opinions. Some policies contain sections that depict the different uses of social media; both for personal and professional purposes. Employees have to understand that they should clearly state when it is their own opinion whenever they share information, either internally or externally. A good example is the social media guideline of Dell Inc. in which employees receive guidelines on how the specific level of required transparency can be achieved (Dell Inc. 2011). In the social media policy Dell Inc. provides their employees with examples of how they should state their opinions on the different social media platforms used by the organisation. The rating of this component depends on the users' understanding of whether the instructions in the policy are clear about the required transparency in the organisation.

- High** The instructions in the policy are clear regarding the required transparency in the organisation. The policy clearly provides steps for users on how to represent opinions on the different platforms used by the organisation.
- Medium** The policy only provides either a general outline or unclear explanations as to how users can achieve the required transparency in their work.
- Low** The policy provides no outline or explanation as to how users can achieve the required transparency in their work.

### Disclaimers / Waivers

Every organisation should have a disclaimer to ensure that the organisation is covered in case of a lawsuit. Some organisations have developed disclaimers for use in social media such as reminding employees that any social media account they use at work is the property of the organisation. The rating is *high* if the policy contains information that covers this component and it is related to the organisation's business activities.

- High** The policy has clear disclaimers/waivers that are related to the organisation's business activities.
- Medium** The policy has unclear disclaimers/waivers.
- Low** The policy has no information regarding disclaimers/waivers.

Table 1 indicates how the components can be used by an organisation to rate their policies (Husin and Hanisch 2011a).

Table 1. An adapted example of the policy rating method

Components Organisation	Coverage	Marking the responsibility	Ramifications of conduct	Highlight needed transparency	Disclaimers/ Waivers
Organisation 1	High	Medium	High	Medium	Low
Organisation 2	Medium	Low	High	Low	High
Organisation 3	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Organisation 4	High	Low	Low	Low	Low

As can be seen from the examples in Table 1, policies from different organisations vary in effectiveness regarding aspects such as area of business (*Coverage*), level of security that is needed for the organisation (*Marking the responsibility* and *Ramifications of conduct*), the amount of interaction that is promoted (*Highlight needed transparency*) within the organisation's working environment, and the need for legal protection (*Disclaimers / Waivers*) (Husin and Hanisch 2011a). The rating tool assists organisations to identify components that require change or improvement.

The rating method is flexible, depending on the needs of the organisation. The method could be adapted by replacing specific components (such as the Disclaimers) or adding components that might be specifically needed by the organisation in their policy. The grading system can also be tailored by the organisation to reflect the relative importance of the various components. The rating method described in this paper, as well as the

SOMEOP framework will assist organisations in developing an effective social media policy suitable to their needs.

## VALIDATING THE MEASUREMENT TOOL

### Focus group

Before any measurement tool can be considered legitimate, it needs to be validated. Validity is defined as the degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Bailey and Pearson 1983). Construct validity is used to test multiple indicators to determine whether each of the indicators is convergent on the main construct (Neuman 2006). Essentially, construct validity allows researchers to determine whether each of the indicators is appropriate for measuring the construct, e.g. the effectiveness of a social media policy (Torkzadeh and Doll 1999). The aim is to determine whether the five components in the measurement tool fulfil the purpose of gauging the effectiveness of a social media policy.

According to Neuman (2006) content validity addresses all the aspects of the conceptual definition of a construct through three steps: 1) specify the content in the definition of a construct, 2) sample from all areas of the definition and 3) develop one or more indicators that tap into all of the parts of the definition. For this paper, content validity ensures that all facets of the construct are represented in the rating tool. It is also important that the definition of each component guides the user in applying the rating tool to assess a policy. For example, the *Coverage* component specifies the number of legal issues covered while the *Ramifications of conduct* ensures that the impact of a user's actions, as well as examples of misconduct, are clearly highlighted within the policy.

In order to validate the rating tool, a focus group session was conducted with the employees from the government organisation who previously either participated in the semi-structured interviews or responded to the questionnaires (Husin and Hanisch 2011a). An invitation to participate in the focus group session was broadcast to all employees through the organisation's social media platform and mass email. Nine people from different levels of management volunteered to participate in the session. The session was video recorded with their consent. The middle managers also shared their experiences with policies in their daily work. Each of the focus group members received a questionnaire to complete during the session. The focus group indicated whether, in their opinion, each of the components was a measure of the effectiveness of a social media policy and whether any additional components should be included. Participants also received an example of a social media policy and were requested to rate it using the rating tool. Finally, the focus group provided feedback on the specific definition used for each of the components as well as the suitability of the rating scale (Low, Medium or High). The results of the focus group led to enhancements to improve the effectiveness of the rating tool.

### Outcomes of the validation process

The focus group session addressed six main questions to validate the rating tool. The first question focused on the construct validity of the tool, and asked the group to rate the relevance of the components for assessing the effectiveness of a policy. Table 2 indicates how the focus group rated the applicability of the components of the rating tool (*Coverage*, *Marking the responsibility*, *Ramifications of conduct*, *Highlight needed transparency* and *Disclaimers / Waivers*). The majority of the focus group participants agreed that all components are relevant for the rating tool.

Table 2. Focus group results on individual components

<i>Components</i>	Very applicable (3)		Applicable (2)		Not applicable (1)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Coverage	7	77.8%	1	11.1%	1	11.1%
Marking the responsibility	7	77.8%	0	0%	2	22.2%
Ramifications of conduct	6	66.7%	1	11.1%	2	22.2%
Highlight needed transparency	7	77.8%	1	11.1%	1	11.1%
Disclaimers/Waivers	5	55.6%	1	11.1%	3	33.3%



Of the nine focus group participants, 88.9% agreed that the *Coverage* component should be included in the rating tool. The participants agreed that it is important to have legal coverage in order to protect the organisation as well as the employees. The *Highlight needed transparency* component was also considered applicable by 88.9% of the focus group. Participant 4 mentioned that a policy should provide guidelines for employees on how to delineate between the use of social media for personal and work life as this is a common question among employees. The second component, namely *Marking the responsibility*, was also regarded as very applicable by 77.8% of the focus group members. If the organisation does not clearly address this, many employees will either ignore the policy or misunderstand their responsibility.

The *Ramifications of conduct* component was also considered as applicable and very applicable by 77.8% of the focus group participants as it informs employees about the impact of their misconduct and provides examples of ramifications of misconduct. For example, participant 3 commented that if an employee “tweeted something politically incorrect while watching TV, that wouldn’t fit his role in government as a public servant”. The last component, namely *Disclaimers/Waivers* was considered to be very applicable by 55.6% of the respondents but the component also had the highest *not applicable* vote (33.3%). The focus group agreed that it is essential to include this component in the rating tool due to its value in case of a lawsuit against the organisation, but in their view it is not as essential as the other components.

The focus group participants indicated that there is some overlap between the *Coverage*, *Marking the responsibility* and *Ramifications of conduct*. Participant 3 regarded the definitions as slightly ambiguous. Participant 4 was of the opinion that *Tone of the policy* is also an important component and should be included as a separate component. Participant 2 added that a ‘non-authoritarian’ tone should be used in a social media policy. However, if the other policies in an organisation are written in an authoritarian tone but the social media policy is written in a non-authoritarian tone, it might cause confusion amongst employees. Participant 1 supported the notion that it is essential for the organisation to gain feedback from different levels of management to ensure that the developed policy guides all employees effectively. Other participants added that it is important that the rating tool measures the level of feedback freedom afforded to employees to comment on the policy.

Participants were then requested to identify the two most essential components for rating a policy (refer to Table 3 below). *Marking the responsibility* was considered to be the most essential component (77.8%). Participant 3 said that he is often asked where the responsibility lies for employees who use social media because employees are still confused about the difference between personal and work usage. Other participants agreed with this comment. Participant 2 argued that his organisation does not have the right to tell him what he can and cannot tweet on his personal Twitter account. However, he agreed that “while working for government, I have a responsibility to protect the government. The policy should provide guidelines on this issue”. It seems that the available policy in their departments do not clearly highlight this matter or even try to resolve it. Similarly, the second most essential component at 55.6%, namely *Highlight needed transparency* was flagged as an area that needs improvement. Table 3 summarises the results from the focus group and reinforces the critical importance of the two components ‘Marking the responsibility’ and ‘Highlight needed transparency’.

Table 3. Essential components within the rating tool

<i>Components</i>	Essential Components				
	Coverage	Marking the responsibility	Ramifications of conduct	Highlight needed transparency	Disclaimers/Waivers
Total no.	3	7	2	5	1
Total %	33.3%	77.8%	22.2%	55.6%	11.1%

The focus group participants agreed that high/medium/low are applicable values for rating the components in the tool, as a quantitative rating method might be subject to interpretation. Participant 3 said “Initially, I thought a 1-5 (quantitative) rating scale would fit the rating tool but the more I applied it, it’s quite obvious that the low-medium-high (qualitative method) suits it better”. The qualitative rating method and the specific descriptions of each of the rating levels therefore provided appropriate guidance for the focus group to rate the example policy.

At the end of the focus group session, the participants were also requested to apply the rating tool to rate an example policy from another organisation. Three participants mentioned that the description for both the *Ramifications of conduct* and *Marking the responsibility* components were not clear enough for them to rate the policy effectively. Participant 7 suggested that the two components should be separated into sub-components to

assist users in rating a policy. Participant 3 added that at first he thought the example policy provided during the session was good but, as he applied the rating tool, he discovered that the example policy had some inconsistencies. This statement highlights the need for organisations to be proactive in ensuring that their social media policy goes through an effective iterative process that clearly highlights the weaknesses in certain areas (Fenwick et al. 2010).

The feedback accumulated during the focus group was used to improve the measurement tool and changes were made to improve clarity and address the participants' comments. These changes are included in the finalised version of the rating tool presented in Appendix 1. High impact changes that were highlighted by a number of participants are described here. Participant 7 mentioned that it would be good to have an area in the measurement tool that allows users to provide free input and comments. An option to provide additional feedback was therefore added to the rating tool. Initially the measurement tool consisted of five components allowing organisations to qualitatively rate the effectiveness of their policy. After the focus group session, one additional component was added, namely *Tone of the policy*. Participant 2 said that "the tone of the policy is important to ensure that the communication that occurs on social media suits the tool". This component is described as follows:

### **Tone of the policy**

The tone of the policy should be conversational and easy to follow without any complex terminology.

**High** The tone of the policy is not authoritarian.

**Medium** The tone of the policy is moderately authoritarian.

**Low** The tone of the policy is authoritarian.

Based on the focus group session, the rating tool was successfully validated as a useful tool that provides organisations with an understanding of their policy's effectiveness level. The tool also allows employees to provide effective feedback on a policy that would be used in their work activities. A diagram explaining the rating tool and a feedback form for use with the rating tool is presented in Appendices 1 and 2.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The development of a policy is not an easy task and ineffective policies have been developed by many organisations (Jackson 2009; Husin and Hanisch, 2011a). A clear and comprehensive policy is important for organisations that use social media in their daily activities as it provides a balance between ensuring that the organisations' goals are achieved and that its interests are protected. This paper provides guidelines for organisations that are in the process of developing new policies regarding the use of social media. The paper outlines the development of a proposed rating tool and a preliminary evaluation of its effectiveness during a focus group session. The policy rating method, as described in this paper, allows organisations to rate their social media policy and determine its effectiveness. The rating tool ensures that the organisation's policy protects its needs and clearly describes what is required from employees. Based on the outcome of the rating tool, weaknesses in the policy can be identified and addressed.

As with any tool, this instrument would benefit from gaining additional feedback from different users within the same government organisation. Such feedback would provide further validation and additional perspectives for the improvement of the rating tool. Further validation and modification of the tool could be performed during additional focus group sessions. Focus group sessions could also be conducted within private organisations that are in the initial stage of implementing social media or that have a strong social media presence. The feedback from these organisations would further enhance the rating tool to address issues within different industries and with different structures, expanding its applicability across the public and private sectors.

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## APPENDIX 1

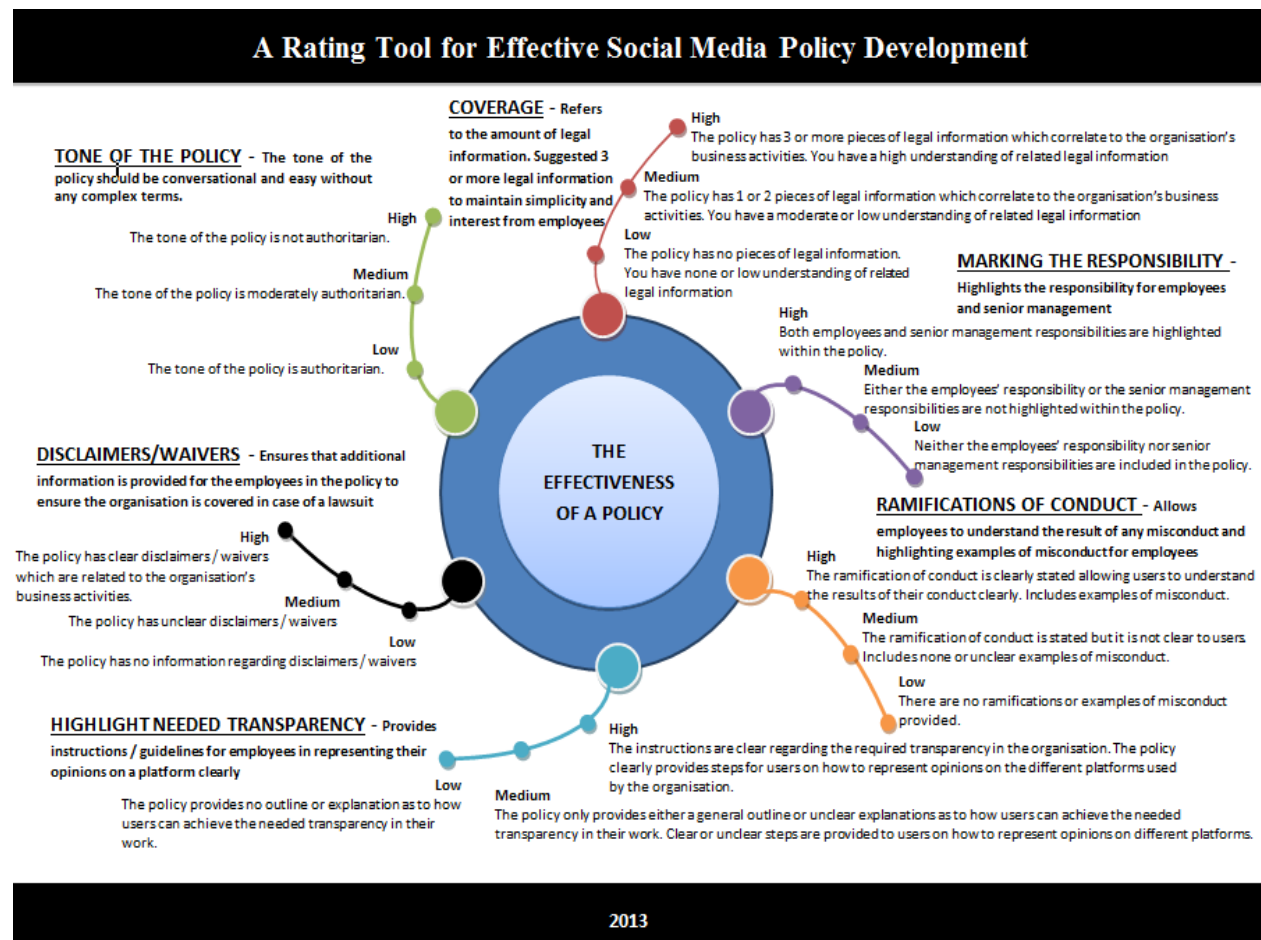


Figure 1: A rating tool for effective social media policy development

## APPENDIX 2

### FORM FOR MEASURING POLICY EFFECTIVENESS

**ORGANISATION:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DEPARTMENT:** \_\_\_\_\_ **NAME OF POLICY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please rate each component by placing an (X) in the appropriate box – High, Medium or Low.**

**COVERAGE:** Refers to the amount of legal information.

<b>High</b> The policy has 3 or more pieces of legal information that correlate to the organisation's business activities. You have a high understanding of related legal information after reading the policy.	
<b>Medium</b> The policy has 1 or 2 pieces of legal information that correlate to the organisation's business activities. You have a moderate or low understanding of related legal information after reading the policy.	
<b>Low</b> The policy has no pieces of legal information. You have none or low understanding of related legal information after reading the policy.	

**MARKING THE RESPONSIBILITY:** Highlights the responsibility for employees and senior management

<b>High</b> Both employees and senior management responsibilities are highlighted within the policy.	
<b>Medium</b> Either the employees' responsibilities or the senior management responsibilities are not highlighted within the policy.	
<b>Low</b> Neither the employees' responsibilities nor senior management responsibilities are included in the policy.	

**TONE OF THE POLICY:** The tone of the policy should be conversational and easy without any complex terms.

<b>High</b> The tone of the policy is not authoritarian	
<b>Medium</b> The tone of the policy is moderately authoritarian	
<b>Low</b> The tone of the policy is authoritarian	

**RAMIFICATIONS OF CONDUCT:** Allows employees to understand the result of any misconduct and highlighting examples of misconduct for employees

<b>High</b> The ramifications of conduct are clearly stated allowing users to understand the results of their conduct clearly. Includes examples of misconduct.	
<b>Medium</b> The ramifications of conduct are stated but it is not clear to the users. Includes none or unclear examples of misconduct.	
<b>Low</b> There are no ramifications or examples of misconduct provided.	

**HIGHLIGHT NEEDED TRANSPARENCY:** Provides instructions / guidelines for employees in representing their opinions on a platform clearly

<b>High</b> The instructions in the policy are clear regarding the required transparency in the organisation. The policy clearly provides steps for users on how to represent opinions on the different platforms used by the organisation.	
<b>Medium</b> The policy only provides either a general outline or unclear explanations as to how users can achieve the needed transparency in their work. Clear or unclear steps are provided to users on how to represent opinions on different platforms.	
<b>Low</b> The policy provides no outline or explanation as to how users can achieve the needed transparency in their work.	

**DISCLAIMERS/WAIVER:** Ensures that additional information is provided for employees to ensure the organisation is covered in case of a lawsuit

<b>High</b> The policy has clear disclaimers/waivers that are related to the organisation's business activities.	
<b>Medium</b> The policy has unclear disclaimers/waivers.	
<b>Low</b> The policy has no information regarding disclaimers/waivers.	

**OVERALL POLICY RATING:** ☐ EFFECTIVE ☐ NOT EFFECTIVE

**ANY CHANGES REQUIRED? :** ☐ YES ☐ NO

**CHANGES REQUIRED / ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK ON THE POLICY**

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